

Statement of Ranking Member Henry A. Waxman
Family Voices' Legislative Champions Reception
May 19, 2014

Thank you for this honor. It is a pleasure anytime to be on an honors list of such old friends and colleagues. And it is especially a pleasure for that list to be from Family Voices.

I have worked with Family Voices since before it was “Family Voices.” From the days that it was individual parents, like Julie Beckett, trying to get the systems to work for their individual kids; to the creation of waiver programs so that the system worked for all Medicaid children, not just one at a time; to the gradual expansion of Medicaid to cover more kids; to the creation of the CHIP program so that even more kids could get health coverage; and now to the enactment of the Affordable Care Act, so that all American children have a right to health care.

I hope you have known that you could always count on me. I have tried to assure that children with special needs can get their care wherever they need it and whoever they are. And I have tried to make Federal programs more generous and more reasonable for all families.

And I have known that I could always count on you. You have the stories that reach politicians and make them listen. You give a face to the statistics that we hear every day. And you have the energy and devotion that only families can bring.

We have made great progress—going from Katie Beckett’s individual waiver to the ACA. But we have a long way to go. There are far too many families in States that are refusing to expand Medicaid. And there are far too few insurance plans that provide the services that kids with special needs require.

I am retiring at the end of this Congress, and I will look back at our thirty-plus years of work on Medicaid and CHIP as some of the best memories I have. And I look forward to working with you in the future as your friend and ally.

Thank you.